

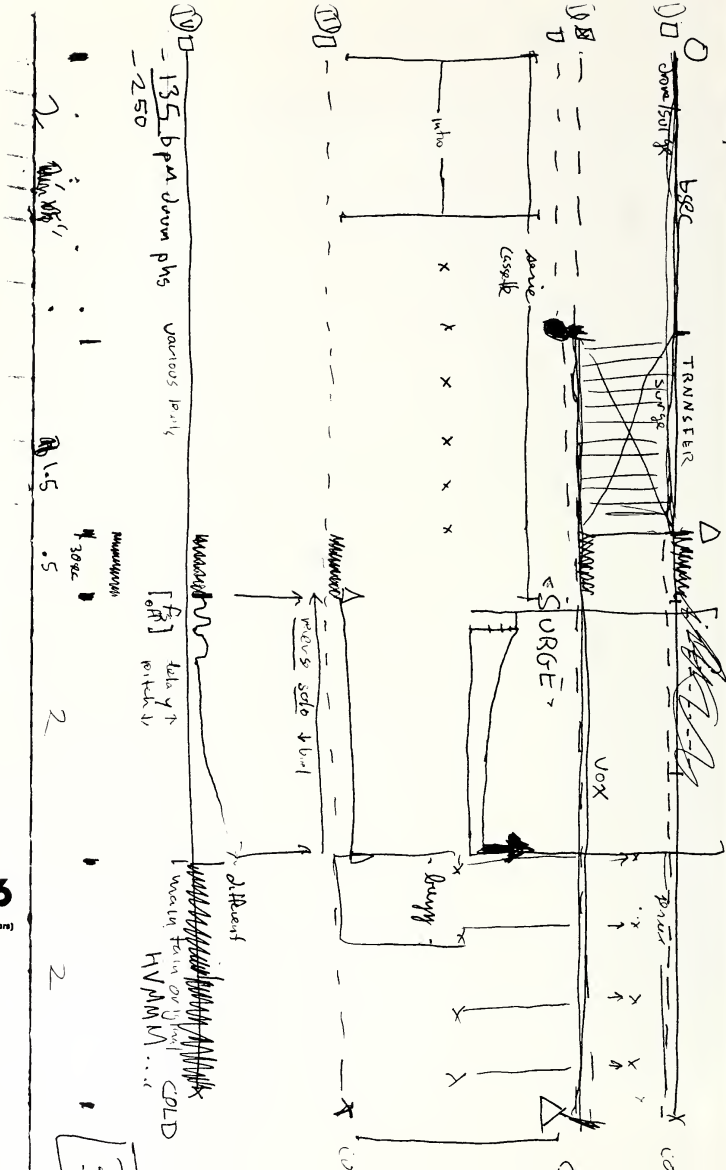
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UNCG's Magazine of the Arts
Spring 1990



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I winced as Raymond shouted to his wife, "We're going to buy that boat!" I was awfully embarrassed to be present at a time like this, so I made myself as invisible as possible.

"We can't afford it," said Sara. "We've still got a year to pay on the car, Raymond, and I just can't see buying a brand new ski boat."

"We can make it," said Raymond. "Don't you worry about that."

"How? Just tell me how we can."

"Look," he said, holding a small notepad in front of her. "Here's our budget—"

"That looks real good on paper, but you know we're already tight as heck when it comes to money."

"We can stop eating so much," said Raymond.

"And who will cook?" said Sara.

"You ought to cook more. Wanda here cooks."

I shrank back at Raymond's reference to me. Boy, did I feel awkward, especially being younger than Sara and then being held up as an example. I was only twenty and Sara was almost thirty.

Sara looked at Raymond, her head a bit sideways because that's how she saw most clearly through her glasses; and then she threw up her hands as she growled at the ceiling, stomped to the bathroom and slammed the door.

Raymond gave me an uneasy smile, so I picked up the newspaper and pretended to read it.

I first met Raymond and Sara Wayside while working in the bus ministry at Reedy Fork Baptist Church. I enjoyed children—in fact I was majoring in religious education at Jonathan Edwards Bible College—and wanted to do something for the Lord. I was already a Sunday school teacher, and bus work seemed a good place to do more. Raymond and Sara had been in it for about a year.

The bus ministry at Reedy Fork was operated in the standard way: we were diligent folks, called by God, and we spent our Saturdays going door-to-door in neighborhoods all over the city, telling people about Jesus and Reedy

Fork's nice buses. We mostly got a warm reception when people would answer the door.

Raymond Wayside was a tall, goofy-looking fellow. It was probably his chipmunk teeth poking out from under that thick moustache that made him look that way. He had milky blue eyes and his brown hair was already thinning at the crown. He had a slow, easy laugh that started back in his throat and sort of fell

THE DEAL

~Sheryl Hooks Southern~

out of his mouth in two or three bursts. Raymond was a talker and could jaw with a perfect stranger for hours, asking, Do you know so-and-so who lives near old Highway 29?

Raymond was an automobile mechanic by trade. You could tell that by the grease under his nails.

His latest job was up at Black Cadillac-Olds, and he had been there for almost three months, a pretty long time by Raymond's account. He worked hard, supporting his wife and two sons.

His wife, Sara, was a short, broad woman who squinted at people through her glasses. She was smart, though, and had worked a good job for ten years at the Ford Motor Credit Company, processing car loans for all manner of interesting people. She once told me about this lady who came in to make a payment on her brand new "Buick ElecTRIC." I guess it takes all kinds. Anyway, whenever Raymond would talk about how Ford products wouldn't run right, Sara would answer back, "Well I reckon Ford's been your bread and butter for ten years now."

Raymond and Sara's boys were gentle children. Ricky, nine, was a brown-haired copy of Ray-

mond, and would sit straight up in the pew each Sunday morning, his hair still wet from the washcloth Sara used to press out the lumps in his hair. Buddy was a blonde, four-year-old sweetheart with a high voice that stammered when he tried to gather his thoughts and talk at the same time. Sara was always shushing him during the sermons.

The Waysides were an up-and-coming rural couple. Raymond's father had taken a vacation lot across the street from Baden Lake, only forty-five minutes away from Greensboro, and on it sat a 1957-model mobile home. Raymond would sometimes take his family there on holidays to spend the night.

But on the Saturday the argument happened, Sara came back from the bathroom, her eyes red.

"We've got two children, Raymond, who are depending on us."

"They'll enjoy that boat!" Raymond was getting cranked up. I could tell. "Ricky and Buddy can learn to ski, even. They got those little bitty skis that can fit a four-year-old! You should see them, Sara!"

"Raymond," said Sara, collecting herself, "do you think God really wants you to buy a ski boat?"

I paid close attention to this one, because I knew she had played her trump card. I looked at Raymond to see how he would answer her.

"Sara, I've prayed and prayed about this boat," he said in earnest. "I think God wants his children to have the best. There's no Bible verse that says a family can't have a good time together. If God is leading us to this boat, then he'll provide a way for us to pay for it."

I looked at Sara and knew she was licked. If the man is the representative of Jesus in a Christian household, then the woman must trust him, sometimes biting her tongue.

It looked like Sara did bite her tongue, and this time she sat down on the couch and rested her hand up against a naked wall stud. Sara and Raymond had

been renovating their house themselves ever since they bought it six years ago. They had paid only a few thousand dollars for it. Raymond liked to say it had potential.

The living room was currently under re-construction. The sofa stood against the two-by-four studs that would someday hold the sheetrock which was stored in the drafty back rooms. Sara had hung curtains on the old windows, and their ruffles spread out over the frameless sides of the windows. I looked from Sara's hand down to my loafers on the particle board floor.

Raymond spoke to me. "Is James coming to go visiting with us today?" "No," I said. "He's got to fertilize the garden."

Sara looked at me with pity, and I felt embarrassed that my husband thought that spreading manure was more important than spreading God's word.

"Let's pray before we go," said Raymond, and we all bowed our heads.

"Heavenly Father, we thank you for your many blessings this Saturday morning. You've been so good to us. Bless the homes we're about to visit today—even now, prepare their hearts for us. Help us know and do your perfect will. O God. Lead us to your choices in all our purchases. Bless James as he works in his garden today, Father. And bless us as we work in the garden of the Lord. In Jesus' name, Amen."

We spent the afternoon visiting homes in a neighborhood near the church. Raymond talked for what seemed ages to a man who himself owned a ski boat as Sara looked off into the distance and I smiled and stood first on one foot, then the other.

"Raymond, we need to go," Sara said. "We need to pick up Ricky and Buddy from Mama's."

Finally, Raymond tore himself away from his conversation and

we went home.

Apparently, God did lead Raymond to the purchase of a ski boat. I first saw the boat in their driveway the very next Saturday morning when James and I arrived before sunrise. We stood on the front porch at that point a large cinderblock box that had no top. A body could only get to the front door by way of a maze of one-by-sixes laid over the cinderblock rims. The roof to the porch

to Ray, it had just what you mean. (cont.)

James smiled. "What do you think Sara thinks?"

I thought back to their argument the previous Saturday. "Sara's against it. I think Ray wants to borrow the boat for the night."

I looked at James as he pulled the car onto our street toward the little house we owned. Now, James is not the most religious

man God ever put on this earth, but he sure is smart. I mean, here are a couple of songs you don't find every day. Like when they sing "In the Sweet Bye and Bye" and other songs about heaven, he tells me, why wait until heaven to be happy? James thinks about some things that a lot of people never do.

I also like the way James looks especially all dressed up in a suit, which is one reason I'm glad we go to church. I get to see him in his broad shouldered jackets and patent leather shoes. His hair is a deep au-

burn color, and it just shines in the sunlight when we're on our way up the church steps to the sanctuary. He wears a beard too, keeps it trimmed real close so it looks just like Glen Campbell's beard. And he still has those cute freckles across his nose. Sometimes I see the other girls in church looking at him when we're together, and I get to feeling how glad I am to have him.

Anyways, James was driving down our street, and I was looking at him, thinking about how smart he is and all, when it occurred to me in a blinding flash that he might want a boat too. We couldn't afford one either.

"James," I said. "Were you thinking about getting a boat like Raymond?" I was never one to hide my hand.

"Well," he smiled. "what if I am?"

Boy, it really made me mad the way he would kid with me so much that I sometimes would

was held up by long, temporary two-by-fours that looked like those flying buttresses I've seen in pictures of old churches over in England. Beside this porch-in-progress stood a sixteen-foot, blue-sparkle Glasspar with an Evinrude inboard-outboard and fold out seats. It was beautiful.

Raymond stuck his head out the front door. "You guys want to go up to the lake after we do our visiting?" he asked.

"Sure!" said James.

"We can go by and get our bathing suits and all on the way back," I said.

Visiting that morning went by faster than usual. Raymond was actually brief at each stop, and in less than two hours James and I were in the car moving down the winding, two-lane road on the way to our house to get our things.

"What do you think about that new boat?" James asked me.

"Well, I'm not sure God led him



know what to think. So I just kept my mouth shut and hoped he was kidding this time.

I must say it was fun at the lake. On the way there we all rode in the Wayside's station wagon, the one they only have a year left to pay on. Raymond and Sara sat up front with Buddy, the younger boy, and Ricky rode in the back with James and me.

"Sing us something," Raymond said to me.

"Yeah," said Sara, "sing us one of the quartet songs."

I sing with the quartet at Reedy Fork, and sometimes we were invited out to "singings" at other churches. A singing is when groups and soloists gather on a Friday or Saturday night at a church, and the congregations all come out and listen to God's music. It's a lot of fun.

Well, anyway, I sang "Jesus is Mine" but it sounded peculiar, since I sing alto and nobody was there to sing lead.

We arrived at the Baden Lake entrance about noon. Down a dusty gravel road surrounded by trees was a large gravel parking lot filled with cars, jeeps, sparkling bass boats with the tall bucket seats for casting, ski boats and sailboats, all waiting in line to get to the launch ramps. Through the rumble of the motors, both in the lot and on the lake, we could hear the clicking of the winches as boaters wound and unwound the cables that held the boats to the trailers. The exhaust fumes were pretty strong waiting in line, so all of us but Raymond got out of the station wagon and went down to the dock. Buddy and Ricky ran to the shore.

"Don't fall in!" shouted Sara after them.

When it came Raymond's turn to back down the ramp, I was amazed at his ability to make the trailer go just where he wanted it to. The rear end of the station wagon went one way and the trailer went another, but he managed to back the boat into the water just as pretty as could be.

"Do you think you could learn to do that?" James asked me.

"I hope I never have to." I looked at him sideways with one eyebrow cocked. I had practiced that look in the mirror several

times, and I hoped it came across as a warning.

It must have worked, because James walked over to where Buddy and Ricky were throwing rocks in to the lake and joined in their game. I sidled up to Sara for the first private moment since the argument last week.

"How's it going with the boat?" I asked.

"Well, I reckon okay," she sighed. "I just hope we can make the payments. If not, we'll see what happens," she said.

"It sure is pretty," I offered.

"Yeah, it is." Sara smiled. "I

Raymond gave the thumb's up sign. James gunned the motor, and as the inboard-outboard gargled like a giant, Raymond rose from the water line like one of those gods from mythology.

guess it is kind of nice to have a ski boat. There's lots of worse things Raymond could be doing. I would imagine this boat cost less than a lifetime of beer and Playboy magazines. And as long as we're faithful, I expect God to bless us."

I remembered Preacher Arnold's message on that. I thought that if Raymond had been led by the Devil instead of God, it wouldn't make sense for God to punish Sara and her children for it. So, it seemed that Sara was looking at the problem

logically.

Once in the boat, we all had a wonderful time. The wind turned Sara's hair into a cat-o-nine-tails, she said it felt like, but since I had worn a scarf it didn't bother me. Raymond had been water skiing before, so he went first. James drove the boat.

"Get her up to about thirty pretty fast, so I can come up," Raymond said from the water, bobbing in his life vest with the skis poking out in front.

"Okay," said James.

When James had slowly pulled the boat forward until the ropes were taut, Raymond gave the thumb's up sign. James gunned the motor, and as the inboard-outboard gargled like a giant, Raymond rose from the water line like one of those gods from mythology. We squealed and Sara hugged her children, who looked like little orange pillows, all bundled up in their life vests; and then Raymond gave another thumb's up, which was the prearranged signal for "go faster."

James upped the speed to 32 and held there for a short time. Sara's hair lashed her face as Raymond began moving like a pendulum back and forth across the wake of the boat. Then he got fancy and began jumping from the top of the wake to the bottom. He smiled widely at his own tricks, and even at that distance he looked like a chipmunk.

All the adults tried skiing that day except me: I didn't want to get my hair wet because the quartet was singing that night at Reedy Fork. All who tried to ski did make it up, even though it took Sara about ten times. It was amazing that James made it up after only three tries, but I guess that's because he's so athletic. Most of those things just come easy to him.

Around five, we were all so tired and hungry, and since I had to sing, we decided to pack it in, so to speak. Ricky and Buddy were whining, Sara and Raymond and James were sticky with lake water and talking about wishing they could take a shower right then, and we were all burned to a crisp. We pulled up to the dock close to the ramp and Sara and Ricky and I got out.

"Get out of the boat, Buddy," said Raymond to his younger son.

"I don't want to," said Buddy,

flatly.

"Buddy, you get out of the boat right now. We're going home," said Raymond.

"I don't want to go home," said Buddy, his cheeks and nose bright with the sun.

"Look, Buddy, you get out of this boat right now, or I'll tan your hide!" said Raymond.

Little Buddy looked at his daddy and screwed up his face with frustration and hunger and exhaustion. "You—NUT!" little Buddy yelled.

James and I turned our backs to grin, while Raymond whacked Buddy once on the seat of his pants.

"I think we should all get something to eat," said Sara.

Raymond backed the trailer into the water and then directed James to ease the boat around in front of it. They hooked the cable to the screw eye on the front of the blue-sparkle Glasspar, and as boat motors churned in the distance the click of the winch announced the end of our day on the water.

That night, James and I made it to the singing just in time, and as we walked down the aisle of the sanctuary, I spotted the Waysides seated about midday down, their hair wet, but combed neatly. I hurried to sit with the quartet, and the tenor, Bill, handed me the music we were to sing that night.

The quartet was an interesting group. We had just begun singing for fun, but then it turned out that we sounded pretty good. So we sang in the service about every other week, and now we were beginning to be asked to sing at other churches. Bill had strawberry-blond hair that was thinning on top and a cleft chin that looked just like Kirk Douglas'. Bill sang tenor, of course, and he had a beautiful voice for a man. Not that men can't sing, but usually in church you get these men who sing like insurance agents. What I mean is, the whole time they're singing, you keep thinking about how they sell insurance for a living. Well, when Bill sang, you thought about the song and his voice. He was good.

Bill's wife Betty played piano and sang lead. She liked to wear blue eye shadow, and James would say she looked like a clown with her make-up, that you could paint up the side of an old barn and it'll look better; but I thought

she was pretty. I honestly blind the way she wore my dad hair short. The interesting thing was that she was ~~long~~ ^{long} ~~hair~~ ^{hair} and her husband was ~~not~~ ^{not} tall. Once, when they sang a duet together, the preacher introduced them by saying, "Now, I guess here's the long and short of it."

Bill found our bass singer through a friend. Chuck, the bass singer, wasn't ~~even~~ ^{even} ~~found~~ ^{found} when we found him, but he could sing a great bass, so he got saved, joined Reedy Fork and we had a quartet. It was funny to me how I expected a bass singer to be a big, heavy man, but Chuck was a short, skinny man. He had a thin, black moustache that made him look just like a detective in an old movie. When he slid down to those low notes it gave me chills.

Anyway, the guest minister that night was a man who had only recently been saved and called to



preach. He received his degree through the mail faster than most people have heard of anyone doing. Word had it that he used to be in gambling and maybe even the Mafia; some people talked about how he used to be one of those pimps before God changed his life. He was short and stocky, and his thin black hair was cut short and combed straight back. In between the singing groups, Reverend Ruggiero (that was his name) would get up to introduce the next group and say a few words.

There were some pretty interesting people in the congregation that night. I was sitting on the fourth row on the left-hand side, where I usually sat, way over toward the edge. I liked to sit a little bit sideways so I could look around. There was Ernest over on the other side, as humble a man as you would ever meet. He was a road equipment operator and worked outside all day, so his face was positively crimson. His ears fanned out around his face, and his small eyes just

shone with joy when he got up to testify. The only thing was, I tried not to get caught in the fall after Sunday School by Ernest. He had a way of slipping people there and taking to them so seriously about Jesus, it seemed, that they just wouldn't get away. The eyes would look with mine and then he'd stop short and sort of scrunch up his shoulders and gesture toward me with both hands. Boy, if you had to go in the restroom before Sunday school and praying, forget it. That had happened to me several times. But he was a real nice man from a distance.

Mrs. Bankhead was there that night. She's the one who led me to Jesus when I was fourteen years old. When I came down to the front that morning, the preacher motioned and she got up and came over to me. She was a large, busty woman, and she wore a grey wig that was so fluffy it looked like she had two heads. She knelt down beside me on the front pew of the church—Baptist churches don't usually have altars at the front, so we just use the front pews—and showed me the proper verses in the Bible. She showed me John 3:16, which I had already seen, but she also showed me that verse that if anyone say "Thou fool" he shall be in danger of hellfire. I'm real glad she showed me that one, because I had been in the habit of using that word. It's curious, though. The main thing I remember about that Sunday morning, the one when I got saved, was her breath. She needed to try some of those breath mints they sell at Eckerd's. But it was good that the preacher could call on her that morning.

Another person I remember from that night at the singing was a lady that I always had trouble overlooking, especially since she always seemed to sit right in front of me. Mrs. Bankhead had very thin hair, and underneath were these four large lumps, almost like the lumps on cartoon characters who have had a blow to the head. Everything else about her was normal, except this one feature. Some of the lumps would even shine. To tell you the truth, it was hard for me to pretend everything was all right with her. I guess at that

people felt that way.

John Freeman was there, a young man who loved the Lord, and you could see it in his eyes. I always felt bad when I saw John, because of what happened the first time I met him. He was on the welcoming committee, the men who stand in the vestibule before a service and shake hands with the incoming brothers and sisters. I walked toward this nice-looking young man and immediately when I shook his hand I flinched because that was when I realized he only had two fingers on his right hand. Well, I knew something didn't feel right. I hope he has forgiven me.

Bill, the quartet tenor, sat under his music beside me at that Saturday night singing, and I checked my bulletin and noticed that we were next up. Preacher Ruggiero got up to announce us.

"Ladies and gentlemen," he began. He had a funny nasal quality to his voice, as if the soft part of the roof of his mouth kind of mashed up toward his nostrils when he spoke.

He went on: "We present to you now a group of God's people who have begun to spread the word of God, through song, far and wide in this great city of ours. And let me tell you, I know for a fact that these people serve the Lord. I have seen evidence of the Lord working through them, and He's going to do even more powerful things tonight."

There was a peppering of Amen! from the congregation, John Freeman was waving his two fingers in the air, and I could tell that people were getting warmed up.

Reverend Ruggiero sat down on the pew on the stage, and the four of us, Bill, Betty, Chuck and I stood up to go to the pulpit where the microphones stood. Betty's piano stood off to the side with a microphone on a horizontal stand.

It was then that it came to me to testify. Don't ask me why—I don't know myself why. But I got the idea that I had something to say, and then I started to feel just as warm as could be, all over. There was almost a buzzing at the top of my neck, and I knew that I was going to talk. I had never before talked. It made me nervous enough just to get up in front of a group of people and sing together

with other people words that were written down on a page. But this time, I was going to do something very different, and I wasn't even sure what.

"Before we sing—" I spoke into the microphone and heard my voice bounding back across the people, and I sensed that Bill beside me had moved back a little, surprised. "I just want to say something."

Mrs. Burcham sounded a strong Amen from over to the right side, and I remembered how much she cared about me. It was then that I started to cry. I realized that all the people in the congregation were watching me, and I caught a glimpse of James and started to perspire all over. For just a second I wanted to back out, and then I remembered the feeling that led me to speak in the first place, so I finished. "I'm so glad that Jesus is my Savior."

Then I spotted the Waysides in their usual spot, midway back on the left. They were watching me so seriously, and Raymond had tears in his eyes too.

A-MEN! said Raymond, along with Ernest, almost right together as I stepped back from the microphone and stood in line with the others.

We sang that night like never before. First was a slow number called "Plenty of Time," about a man who waited too late to call on Jesus. There wasn't a dry handkerchief to be had in the whole sanctuary that night. Even my James was a little misty. Then we sang a rapid-fire harmony, "I'll Soon Be Gone from This Old World," and everybody looked so happy I just thought they would just about pop. You never heard such powerful Amens, and I even heard Raymond say a few, with Sara looking on, surprised. When we walked back to our seats, old Ernest and Mrs. Burcham stood up together on opposite sides of the aisle, and we all knew they both wanted to testify. Ernest deferred to Mrs. Burcham, and when she was done telling how God had blessed her life, Ernest took his turn. Well, pretty soon, people all over the place were popping up to tell their blessings and the Thank-You-Jesuses were flying all over.

After a while, Preacher Ruggie-

ro stood up and said that God had worked a miracle in that place and had led him to offer an altar call in case there were any who wanted to give their hearts to Jesus or rededicate their lives to God.

"As a matter of fact," he went on, "God is telling me that there is someone here tonight that He is calling into His service full time to preach the Gospel."

The Amens stopped and we all became quiet.

"Turn to hymn number 332 and let us sing," the Reverend said, and our pianist, Betty, was already back on the bench, playing the last line of the hymn for the introduction.

Very solemnly we all began to sing "Just as I Am." Reverend Ruggiero mopped his brow with his handkerchief and looked upwards toward the ceiling of our tiny church and wept, while many made their way to the front pews and knelt down to pray. Mrs. Burcham was one of the first to go up, and I knew she went to pray a special prayer for her lost husband who was a plumbing inspector for the city.

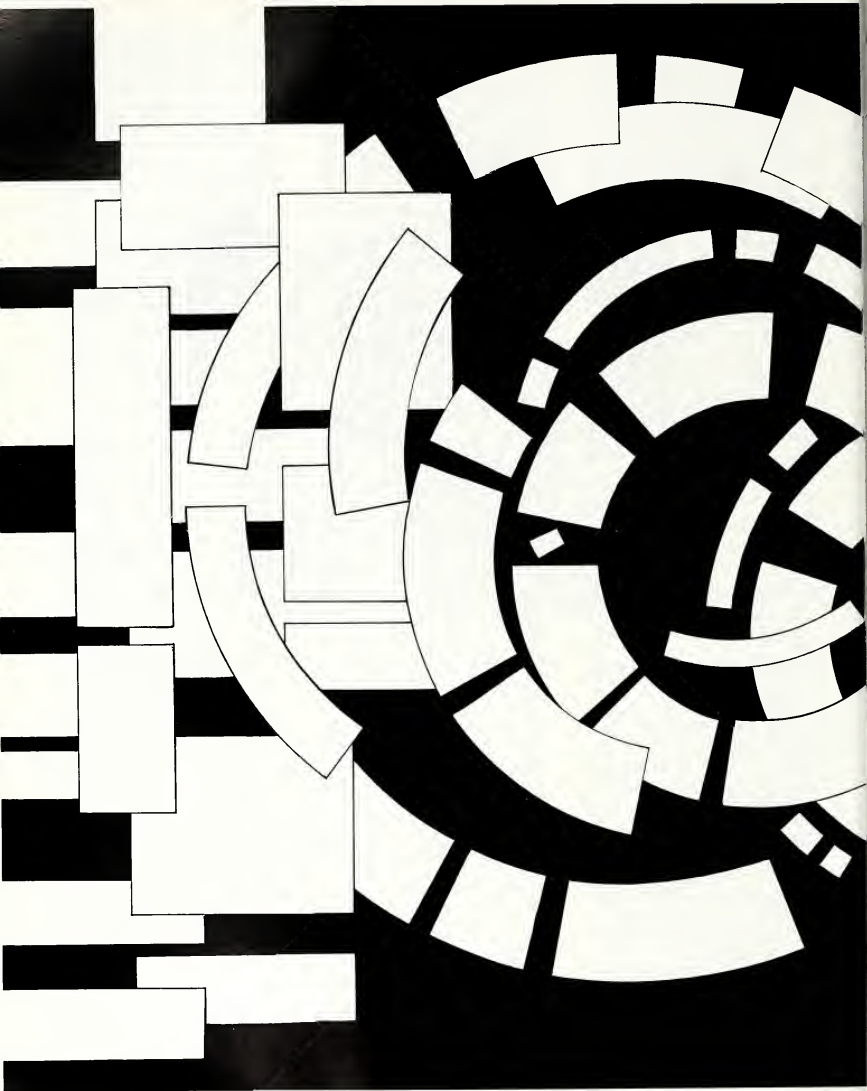
It was while I was singing the last line, "Oh Lamb of God, I come," and trying hard not to look at those pesky knots on Mrs. Bankhead's scalp that I noticed out of the corner of my eye Raymond coming down the aisle. He had never in all my experience gone forward to rededicate his life or even to pray, and I truly wondered what had led him to the front like that. He shook hands with the preacher, whispered to him, and they knelt together.

Then all of a sudden brother John Freeman, from over near where Sara sat, started to shout. He waved all seven digits when he shouted, and it was like a wake of energy flowed out, setting off Amens in little circles all over the building. John seemed to be very shy, that is until the Spirit came on.

Later, as we all sang the final lines of the fourth verse again, people quieted and preacher Ruggiero motioned for Raymond to come stand beside him there at the front of the church.

"This man," he said, "has been called by God into the ministry. He wants to quit his job and preach full time."

The congregation resounded ap-



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MARBLE WINDOWS

ORGANIC DEMONSTRATION

This past fall, the Weatherspoon Gallery was able to expand into new, larger quarters in the Anne & Benjamin Cone building on the corner of Tate and Spring Garden streets. In some eyes, this is the culmination of many years of restoration, renovation, building and re-building on UNCG's campus. The new gallery cost 7.5 million dollars, 3.5 million

of which came from private sources. It has over 46,000 square feet of floor space. The old Weatherspoon, located next to McIver building on the corner of Walker Avenue and McIver Street, is by no means obsolete; it is now being used for student exhibitions for classes and organizations.

The gallery was built and contracted by Boney

& Assoc. of Charlotte; the architect was Ronaldo Giurgola. The design organically incorporates elements of nearby buildings: the columns of Aycock theater, the tower of the church across the street, the stockiness of Graham building. The facility has two classrooms, one main gallery, and six smaller galleries; in addition to exhibition and



main gallery, and six smaller galleries; in addition to exhibition and instruction space there is a giftshop, a slide library, and a large patio. The bulk of the university's art collection will eventually be stored there. With these features, Weatherspoon is now perfectly suited for the school's art department and art interests, and will be a highly recognizable exhibition

they have an opinion at all. Construction was, of course, very public, owing in no small part at all to the busy intersection on which the building took place. And this high visibility certainly added to the controversy. Many complained of the relative lack of windows— in retrospect an outrageous statement, considering what really goes on the walls. And some questioned the necessity.

dusty existence in obscure storage with occasional forays on loan or other brief visibility. The old gallery did not have enough room to do this stock justice. Now space exists to show the collected pieces— and more. More respect can now be paid to the current talents at UNCG. UNCG probably has the best conservatory in the state; certainly one of the best in the region. And at last the proper



area.

Very recognizable, to say the least. Many students seem to feel that the building is "ugly," if

The need has long been recognized. The university has an extensive art collection, which until recently faced a long,

room is given; our artists are allocated a place which will properly allow them to get much-deserved attention.

For all the claims of exterior ugliness — not perhaps without some justification, from the outside, one gets an overall unwieldiness about the building— many of these

opinions will change if their holders would simply go inside. One is greeted by a vast lobby, a polished floor, and some

of the most beautiful acoustics on campus. The elevator is as luxurious as a pharaoh's tomb. The classrooms are functional, but not so drab as the tawdry functionalism of McIver, or, for that matter, the old gallery. The small galleries are rather intimate—contrasting with the airy comfort of the passages. The best room is the main exhibition room on the second floor. White, stark, plain, with a smooth, warm, wooden floor, this room exhibits whatever with the friendly usefulness of a gymnasium which it resembles. Overall, the gallery spaces manage to be unobtrusive, but without being totally blank or nonpresent, and without distracting from function.

Certainly, the gallery, whatever opinion one may have of it, is at most of secondary importance. Its prime reason of existence is the demonstration of art. The orifice/gallery must not distract, but must allow unmitigated exhibition. Galleries should not take over; at the largest, they may complement—but never ignore.

The new gallery is a comfortable addition to the campus and the city. It is hoped that the building will not become just

another one for students to ignore. It is also hoped that its appeal will extend beyond the traditional collegiate arts community. But despite the probable outcomes of the effort,

the new gallery will serve for the exhibition of plastic art on our campus indefinitely.

Text by: David Andrew

Photographs by: Jim Counts



Negative

Capabilities



First Place

Julie Freshwater



Second Place

Christopher Longworth

On making coffee and considering the effects of travel

Sun is hard
on brittle leaves
peels their skin
leaves the veins
the veins held to the sky
look like trees.

Light is dying on thick rinds
of Halloween
pumpkins for sale in the churchyard.

The old men are in charge
of the cash boxes.
They eat fried chicken
in the shade of a funeral tarp
and see things in the corners
of their eyes.

On the road
drivers honk their horns,
and sigh.

They want to go where it's bright
Home to that place where a remote control
lies on the end table.

The church bells strike
against the distance
drivers push on the gas
because the night seeps in fast
and trains slice the air
pressing on
whistling
organ keys.

The heat takes a while
to fill the spiralling
burner on the stove.
We light cigarettes
in a dim kitchen
and watch the trees fade
into the windy and uncertain night.

"It's O.K., you know,
just those moments when I come home
from work and I can't get in touch
with anyone."

The water is boiling
the bubbles rush to the surface
each perfectly contained
like the faces of people
passing each other
and waiting for airplanes.

Amy Wilkinson



Tied for Third Place

Phillip Boland

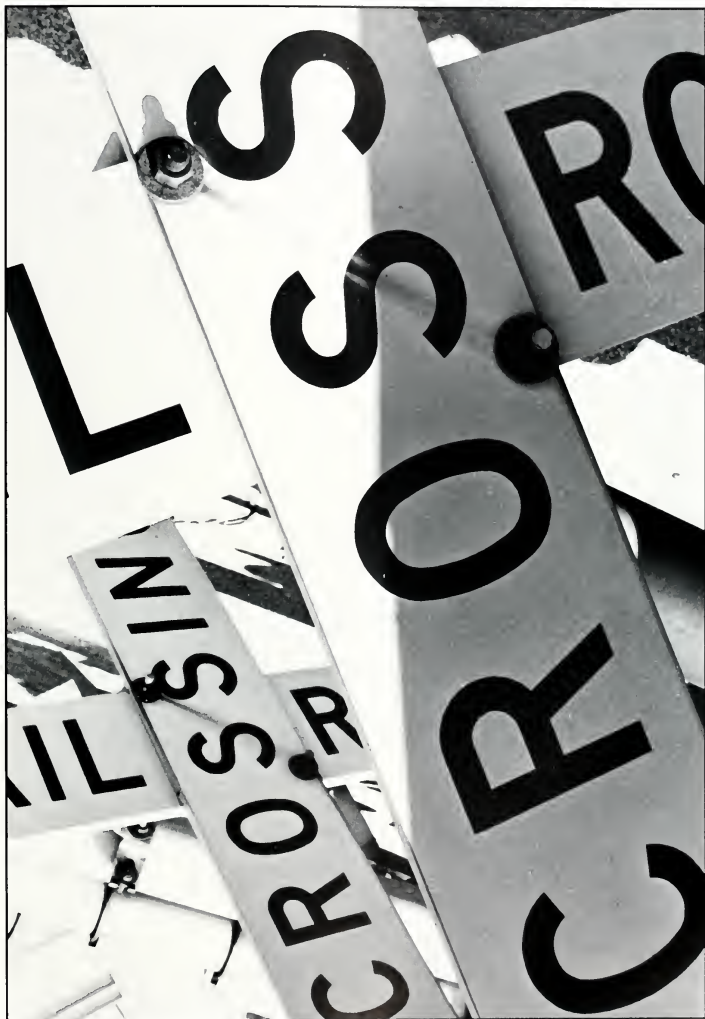
Alphabet Soup

I sat in the window listening
as the click, click of the typewriter
got faster, then slow again.

My feet were in contrast with the hot sun
and the cool bricks of the red building.
A gentle breeze rustled all that alphabet soup,
strewn across the floor.
The clicking continued like false nails drummed
on the desk of some impatient secretary.
The soup continued to flow out of his fingers
and onto the carpet.

Some day in a pewter dish, I will gather the soup,
and feed it to my children.

Meredith Hughes



Honorable Mention

Susan Allen

self proclaimed unaccomplished poets

sit and stare outside
as the streets get washed.
strum sometimes
but don't know chords
only classical whines
or just whales
of poor trumpets.

know strumpets
and laughter as thick as molasses.

they'd sell their shoes
for a jukebox slowdance.
they'd demolish their car
for real money.

their breath feels tinny
at your nape,
their laughter is booming
behind.

last night they slayed
the dragon
and proclaimed themselves king.

so far no accomplished
publisher has overthrown
their station sending symbols
to free radio.

Gary McCracken



Honorable Mention

Elizabeth Osborne

TRIVIAL PURSUIT

I want you as I stand
beneath the oak at the
edge of the pasture,
like the wino who wants
another sip of gin—
no satisfaction,
no permanent address.
I want you in the
summer's steaming breeze,
my mind a hazy television
screen of motel rooms and
embroidered silk ties.
I want you as I lean
from the bank of a
toxic river, remembering
clear stream days
I skip stones, flat and
round across the
black water, wondering if
each will arrive
on the other side.

The sky is suddenly a navy blue
goose-down comforter
haphazardly spread over waterbeds
everywhere, and your scent
lingers until morning under
borrowed sheets and stars.
I wanted you in adolescent days
on the creaking front porch swing
as I dreamed tailored suits and
department store cologne
Moving and near
I could almost touch your arm
as I lay in the second floor's
half-full double bed

I want you now,
as shadows come and pass
along the flowery papered wall and
trees blow hollow whispers against
the window's separate panes
I pull the covers back and slide
into a night of exhausted dreams,
trivial pursuit.

Tonight I will lie here again,
your missing heat condensing on the
bathroom mirror,
my cheap tears blindly rolling over
the pillowcase,
mingling with perfumed rivers of
other little girls who
reach for you in the night.

Charlotte Frye



Honorable Mention

Elizabeth Craven



Tied for Third Place

David Sharp

Sangre de vida

*Ya esta abierta la puerta de la muerte,
y el animal esta corriendo en confusion,
los dias de juventud paracen illusion
al animal atrapado sin suerte.*

*La gente que esta tratando para verte
esta buscondo su propio vision;
ya sabe lo que es la conclusion;
te odia y te quiere con la misma fuerte.*

*Hombre y animal no pueden escapar;
enemistado a sangre y fuego esperamos,
grande, pero lo no podemos evitar—*

Pues, en la corrida nos quedamos...

*Simbolo de muerte te quiero odiar,
Sangre de vida, no puedo olvidar.*

Blood of Life

*Already opened is the door of death,
and the animal is running in confusion,
the days of youth seem an illusion
to the trapped and unlucky beast.
Those that are trying to see you
are seeking their own vision;
though they already know the conclusion;
they hate you and love you with equal force.
Man and animal are unable to escape;
at sword's point we wait,
large, but the end we cannot avoid—
so, in the ring we wait...
Symbol of death, I must hate you,
Blood of life, I cannot forget.*

Nicole Crews



Elizabeth Craven



"Crescent"

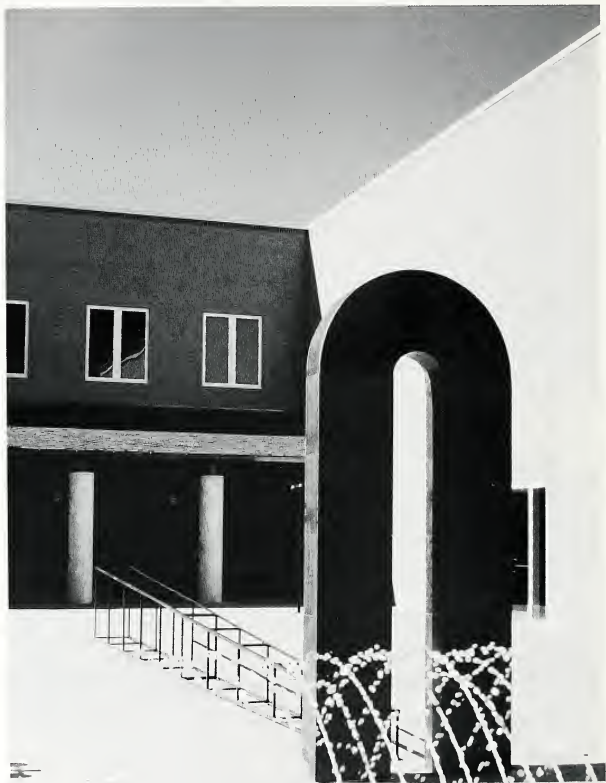
Jim Counts



Julie Freshwater



Phillip Boland



"Eye of the Needle" 1989 Oiled Steel 6'x13'x45'

CARL BILLINGSLEY



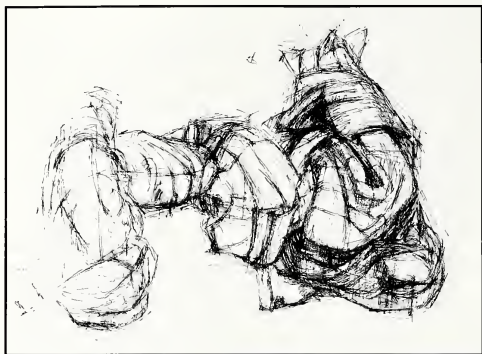
"Spiral Form #29" 1989
Cast Iron 10"x4"x4"



"Manhattan" 1989 Cast Iron 12"x16"x3"

REBECCA WEICHINGER

PENNY SCHENCK



Untitled 1989 Pen and Ink 16"x11 3/4"

AVERY LLOYD



"The Decision" 1989 Woodcut

The Mythical Voyage of Marilyn



A. DOREN

Conflicting

An increasingly well-known educator, historian of education, and critic of literature and culture, Gerald Graff was educated at the University of Chicago and Stanford University. He has been a professor of English at Northwestern University since 1966. In addition to numerous articles and two co-edited works (most recently 1989's *The Origins of Literary Studies in America: A Documentary Anthology*, with Michael Warner), Graff is the author of *Literature Against Itself* and the extremely influential *Professing Literature: An Institutional History*. In that book and elsewhere, Graff has put forward the controversial "Conflict Model" of education for which he is best known, and of which we spoke with him in this interview. He has visited UNCG for the month of April as Visiting Distinguished Professor in the College of Arts and Sciences' Center for Critical Inquiry.

CORADDI: When your approach to teaching literature is discussed, the phrase "teach the conflicts" always

arises. Could you tell us what you mean by that?

GERALD GRAFF: The idea arose in connection with the controversies that erupted five or six years ago, over the humanities curriculum and especially the so-called "canon" of literary and humanities texts to be taught. In 1984, former Education Secretary William Bennett published a report entitled "To Reclaim a Legacy" which charged that higher education had departed from the tradition of the Classics and that we were teaching too much in the way of popular culture and media, and also works by minority traditions—women's literature, black literature and so forth. He argued that we should get back to teaching the core of Great Books. This argument coincided with other demands for core curricula which would return to a more-or-less small body of classic texts. On the other side were people who had been arguing for some time that the canon needs to be opened up and had been teaching works by non-mainline authors.

This controversy flared

up publicly at Stanford a couple of years ago, when the faculty, after much deliberation and debate and a good deal of acrimony, decided to transform its traditional Introduction to Western Civilization course—to open it up to these minority traditions. Again the issue tended to divide politically. Black students at Stanford were quite vociferous about the need to represent non-Western traditions and not to favor Western culture over other cultures. It seemed to me that what was being lost in these debates was that the conflicts themselves were the most interesting things that have happened in higher education in a long time. In some ways the conflict over Western Civilization was more interesting, or just as interesting, as what the individual factions in the conflict were saying. So I started arguing that what students really needed to know about and to take part in was the conflicts themselves.

I began developing the idea that rather than assume we have to resolve such conflicts on one side or the other, we should or-

Texts:

A Conversation With Gerald Graff

ganize the conflict itself—say, between Western and non-Western traditions—in the required introductory course. The course might then become a course in the canon conflict, with all the various implications that the conflict would have. That is, why not start viewing the conflict itself as something that can be potentially productive, even if we continue to disagree about it?

CORADDI: The rationale behind the changes was never mentioned in the course itself? It was just altered?

GG: That's what I understand. This isn't surprising, since in the history of education it has rarely occurred to curriculum planners that the controversies that underlie or lead up to changes in the curriculum could be part of the curriculum. This may be what's new or innovative in what I'm trying to do. Traditionally, there is the assumption that we faculty and administrators will meet behind closed doors and get our act together, get agreement about what the Great Books are, why they are

great, how to teach them, and what their values and principles are. We thrash things out in private and then present you, the students, with the results. So the students get the results of the controversies but they don't get the controversies themselves. But one could argue that the process of controversy itself is a very important part of the whole educational process. Furthermore, in a period like ours when the faculty and the administrators themselves can't agree, when they go into the closed rooms and there is still no agreement because of that left/right polarization I described a moment ago, or because of other kinds of disagreement, then it seems to me all the more necessary to make the process of disagreement part of the object of study and try to present it to students in a way that makes it interesting and relevant to their concerns and interests. I think this can be done.

After all, the students are already being exposed to interpretive conflicts over books, taste, and other implications of reading. It's

not a question of turning our backs on the books and focusing attention on the professors' interpretations. Both the books and the professors' interpretations are already part of the scene, but students are not being introduced to the importance of the debates that surround the books, which are part of the context for reading the books. This is what I want to bring into play.

CORADDI: What is the alternative? What is the method that keeps the conflict out? Obviously from university curricula now, very different viewpoints are being taught.

GG: That is true, and some of my critics have said, "Well, I always teach the conflicts myself, in my own course". Or they say that students are already being exposed to the conflict by virtue of the fact that they take five different courses with five different professors. But this objection misses the point.

It may be that students are exposed to five different versions of the humanities, but since they are exposed to them separately

they are not really being asked to notice the differences. They often don't see the differences as different because the five different experiences are experienced separately. The individual teachers aren't themselves organized in relation to each other, each professor is not teaching in relation to the other four. So the differences and conflicts are being evaded rather than confronted and worked through.

Also, I know from talking to many students that students are not encouraged to think of the professors' approach as an approach. The fact that a particular approach to 18th century literature, say, is being put forth—I think students are aware of this, but particular emphasis is not always being placed on this. There are controversies over how to approach the 18th century, or there are controversies over whether a category like period, the 18th century, is the best category from which to teach literature. These tend to be screened out. Once you have an isolated course the student tends to experience it as if it just is 18th century literature. Yet right down the hall another course in the 18th century novel may be very different, may emphasize that women were writing there. It seems to me we are not really teaching the conflicts at the moment when we have a series of professional monologues going on in isolated classrooms. Some students will make a conversation out of these monologues in their own heads, but it seems to me a very small percentage of

students are going to be able to do that or will do it.

I guess as you can see from what I have been saying, that the notion of teaching the conflicts, as I understand it, would involve a much more connected and correlated curriculum than we now have. Teaching the conflicts is not something that an individual professor can easily do. It assumes a more collective organization of courses, which then raises some questions about how you could do it. I have been thinking about that, and others have been thinking about that too.

CORADDI: What are some of them?

GG: Well, what you've done around here, I gather, is a step in that direction with the All-Campus Read. You have everybody in the college read the same book. I understand it has worked well. What did you think of it?

CORADDI: I think it has the promise to work well with larger participation. I think it is a larger idea than it is a reality right now. It's moving toward larger participation.

GG: One thing that I have been proposing that is along the same lines, or would be based on the same principle, would be to encourage professors, as few as two or three or as many as a dozen or more, across a number of courses to read some of the same texts within those courses and then agree periodically to have combined class meetings, which would be fairly

large, to discuss those common texts. Students might be invited to help organize these common meetings or give some of the presentations in them, or at least write papers about them. I gather there has been some move in this direction in the conflict over the Western Civilization course here. There is this new program now in the Western Civilization course entitled Teaching the Canon and Its Conflicts. I'm not yet sure if this idea of using common texts to draw together courses or sections of courses is now in use, but I gather that this is part of the plan.

There are other ways to do it. You can set up capstone courses, or synthesizing courses, taken in the senior year, which try to give students a sense of what the different contexts are, the different vocabularies and frameworks for dealing with humanities or sciences, or both, that help students understand what some of the central disagreements are, as well as the agreements. The underlying idea behind this argument is that the quality of intellectual community on a campus is important. It seems to me that exposure to a series of courses, especially courses which are isolated from one another, doesn't really constitute for a student a sense of what an intellectual community is like. One can try to turn a course into an intellectual community, but I think that it is difficult to do that, for various reasons. The fact that the courses are cut off from one another tends to disrupt intellectual com-

munity. Think about at this moment all the courses that are being given—right as we are speaking. We could imagine what all the professors and students are saying. Somebody in a psychology course right now might be talking about Freud in a way that is interestingly related to or different from the way somebody is talking about Freud in a literature class. Or even in physics somebody might be saying something that relates to what another teacher is saying about modern poetry. Right now they are all talking past one another. It is very curious, because in theory all of these courses are part of a common conversation, but in practice they can't be part of a common conversation because the teachers don't know what the other teachers are saying. The conversation can't actualize itself. Once you step back from this seemingly normal situation of isolated monologues which we get so accustomed to, it's a little bizarre isn't it?

Imagine going to a party and seeing a bunch of people in little separate rooms talking to themselves. How would you be able to understand what kind of community they represent? It seems to me that when you break an intellectual community into disconnected courses, break up their dialogical relationships to one another, you make it harder for students to see what an intellectual community is all about. Another analogy would be to imagine if you wanted to learn the game of baseball. You go to the park and instead of seeing the game you are shown

to a series of separate rooms in which you see the pitchers in one room going through their motions and then the hitters in another room, and then the third baseman and the outfielders and the fans and umpires. You see each of them are doing what they normally do in the game but they do it separately. How much of a sense of the game would you be able to help?

CORADDI: And the fact that they were wearing the same uniforms wouldn't help.

the point is that you're not helping by breaking the game up into these disconnected fragments. I would think that the analogy would hold to the intellectual game, which is a difficult game, especially now that it is spoken in many different, conflicting vocabularies. It seems to me that in order to have a chance to make sense of this game you need to see it played in a more connected way than the students normally do. So this is another argument for a more organized, collective way of teaching.

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GG: Well, such clues might help you piece things together, and if you knew a little about the game, you could get a correct picture of it. But it would be difficult if you never see the game played. Now you could go to the game and be bewildered too. I've watched cricket and been bewildered. But

CORADDI: From what you have said, this takes on a larger context than simply teaching literature.

GG: I think it should, yes. I think it is an approach to the whole problem of academic intellectual culture. My view is that the problems that students have cut across the de-

partments. The problems have less to do with the specific subject matter than with the intellectual discourses in which all the subjects are dealt with. Whether we are dealing with literature, or psychology or sociology, or even with some of the hard sciences, we are dealing with these subjects in analytical and critical vocabularies which are quite different from the everyday layman's vocabulary. In fact, I coin a term for these languages of the university—Intellectual-speak. It seems to me there is a huge gulf between Intellectual-speak and Lay-speak. This gulf between intellectual languages and ordinary languages, is tied into a larger conflict or gulf between intellectuals and non-intellectuals, or whatever you want to call them. It is interesting to look at the discrepancy between the atmosphere of the classroom and then the student union building, which represents popular culture. The classroom's distance dramatizes the huge gulf between the life of intellectual culture and the world outside, in which the professors also live. It is interesting, that when students see us professors in the supermarket they are a little startled that we exist in the "real world", that we have to go to the supermarket, too. It's always a little unsettling, one feels a little embarrassed about it. Again, this is a symptom of this gulf.

CORADDI: It seems that there are a lot of different gulfs. Not just the gulf between intellectual and pop-

ular culture and between Intellectual-speak and Lay-speak, but all of the gulfs between the dialects of Intellectual-speak that

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are local to each department.

GG: Yes, it's very complicated. As you say, within Intellectual-speak you've

got a good many dialects of sciences and humanities and within the sciences and humanities. This complication is all the more argument for a more connected and correlated system where some of the problems caused by these differentiations could be fruitfully dealt with.

CORADDI: Do you think that the administrative gulfs are also a difficulty?

GG: Sure, faculty vs. the administration is often felt to be a severe gulf. On the bigger campuses the faculty hardly ever see the administrators, and it would be unusual on most campuses for anyone to see the college president on campus.

CORADDI: I wasn't actually thinking of the administration with a capital A vs. the faculty, but of the gulf between the running of the different departments. It is a complex enough task to coordinate a department, with all its different elements, and bridge the gaps between them.

GG: Well, a symptom of what you describe would be the fact that administration itself has become an autonomous set of practices. That may not itself be bad, but if what's being administered is intellectual culture then administration should include an analysis of what is involved in organizing an intellectual culture in something like a curriculum. All too often we fall back on our old-fashioned practices of departments and courses, which are no long-

er necessarily the best ways to administer intellectual culture. Teaching the conflicts is an administrative strategy as much as anything else.

CORADDI: From what you've said, it seems that students could be a part of the presentation of the conflicts. Do you foresee or promote student participation in the discussion before it even gets to the class level?

GG: I'm in favor of as much student participation as possible (and would be even if students wanted to do something other than what I think we should do). The professors are in control of the discourse, of Intellectual-speak, and the students, presumably, are trying to initiate themselves into it. I think the isolated course system encourages student passivity, and that a more collective system with students asked to share in constructing the terms of the collectivity would encourage a more active kind of student participation. There are problems with this, students who do not want to become more active, who say "you dish it out and I'll write it down." That's not easy to change overnight and for a certain percentage of students it perhaps won't change. But there is within the student body a large potential segment of students who are looking for ways to become more active and more engaged in their education than they now feel able to be.

CORADDI: Your book, *Professing Literature*, deals

with the effects of the history of teaching on the present day. The tendency has been to do the opposite of what you're saying, to form ideological unity within departments or within universities. Do you feel that certain degrees of unity, whether on the department or university level, could be played against other, different, ideologically unified groups, with the results of this conflict being productive?

GG: Well, there are cases of departments that have unified around a particular approach. For example, the University of Chicago's English Department had a particular approach which came to be called the Chicago school of criticism. More recently, again at Chicago, the Economics Department under Milton Friedman has been dominated by a particular kind of conservatism. For a long time Northwestern's Philosophy Department was known for a strong orientation toward existentialism and phenomenology. Here the conflicts, as you say, were not inter-departmental so much as across university lines. That can work very well. I think what's important is that the issues being debated within a discipline become visible in some way. But to come back to your question, you mentioned that departments in the past had tried to unify themselves. I think, though, that at a certain point in the history of education most departments gave up trying to find a unifying principle and operat-

ed on a principle of pluralism. They said that what we want to do is represent a wide variety of views toward the subject and those departments I just described that had a unified approach have tended more and more to be the exception rather than the rule. The standard departments have been pluralistic. In literary studies you've got a historical scholar, a textual scholar, a feminist, a Marxist, and so forth. What I'm advocating is a third approach, neither unity nor disconnected pluralism, but a pluralism that would take advantage of the different conflicts that result from a pluralistic system.

CORADDI: This may just be a student perception because the conflicts haven't been taught, but do you feel that the conflicts themselves have been defused by pluralism, by what you call in the book the "field coverage" model?

GG: Precisely. The assumption tends to be that the object is to expose the student to a wide variety of views—which is fine, but it's not enough. Merely to cover five approaches to literature is a good start, but in a good education a student needs to see how those five different approaches engage one another, how they speak to one another. I think the pluralistic coverage that we ask for is a very good idea, and students are rightly receptive to the notion of trying out different views, the more viewpoints the better. But I don't think this should be the end of

the process. Things become more interesting when you starting asking how viewpoint A relates to viewpoint B. This is the way we improve our thinking about any subject, by engaging the differences, not just letting them sit there. You learn not just by covering different fields, but by seeing how they speak to one another or fail to do so and getting in on that interaction.

CORADDI: The problem that pluralism can create is only increasing now, through what you said about the debate over the canon. More and more is being included.

GG: Yes, pluralism is being stretched to the breaking-point, as its conservative critics are pointing out. One wants to know which of these plural ideas are right or wrong, what cases can be made for them. Where the conservatives go wrong is in assuming we will organize the university around *their* view of the right answers. I don't think we are going to agree on that and I don't think that we have to agree.

But let me suggest an example of why pluralism as such fails: take the college catalog and the promotional literature universities send out. You see statements like this: "the University of X believes that strong commitment to the liberal arts is in no way incompatible with solid vocational training and with meeting the needs of a technological society." The effort of this rhetoric is always to show that we can have as much variety as we

want without conflict.

Why not look at things differently? Why not admit that we all know that liberal arts traditions do in some ways come in conflict with vocational or scientific education? That's nothing to be ashamed of, it just shows that these contradictions and conflicts are there. What's wrong with contradictions and conflicts? Why pretend that there's never been any conflict in American culture between literature and business? If you read American literature, much of it's about that conflict, and a lot of what we teach has to do with conflicts between the humanities and the sciences. Why do we feel that we have to paper these conflicts over? Well, there are answers to that. One of them goes back to the notion of administration I referred to before, which conceives of administration as a science of defusing or avoiding conflict. That is a notion of administration that needs to be rethought: if the conflicts are there, if they are interesting, and if they have educational potential why not use them instead of defuse them? One reason why catalog prose is unreadable and boring is that it tries to divorce itself from conflict, which is to say that it tries to divorce itself from reality, which is why it sounds so formulaic and uninteresting. Yet we expect it to be that way.

CORADDI: It's born of the fear of alienating anyone.

GG: The fear of offending anyone, that's right. But

you wouldn't have to offend anybody to say, let's face it, we know that in our society we have had conflicts—there were slaves once and nobody disguises that in the South. (Or do they? I'm a Northerner, you know?) Why disguise the fact that in universities the scientists and humanists haven't always got along with each other, or humanists and humanists? Why is this considered shameful?

CORADDI: In your book you recall how in the 19th century there was a context created outside the classroom by a "surrounding literary culture" of student literary societies and student literary magazines. As someone working for a student literary magazine, I wonder how much you feel this "surrounding culture" remains or how it could be revitalized?

GG: That's a good question. Of course, in the 19th century, it was not only the college literary societies. The towns had literary societies as well, and no movies, TVs, or radios. The cultural life of the town revolved around literary and debating societies. Most of Emerson's famous essays were lectures that he went around reading. These literary societies were frequently tied in with the churches, but families also read together in the home. One of the problems we face in the 20th century is that, although you still have the college magazines and so forth, they are more marginal to the college itself. They often serve an important function for those stu-

dents who participate in them, but they tend to be special activities for students who have interests in those directions. They don't create a public space for the whole college and aren't central to the college the way they were in the 19th century.

What could be done to revitalize them? I think one

the Super Bowl. On a college campus, the football or basketball team is the one thing everybody on the campus knows about. People haven't read the same books, they don't go to the same churches, they haven't studied the same subjects, but they all know about the football team, or at least 90% of them do.

(Educators) feel that intellectual culture is constantly fighting a losing competition with media culture and sports culture...maybe the way to revive the kind of intellectual culture...would be...to tie it more intricately with media...

could start by looking at the way our cultural life has changed, the way it revolves around mass culture. Our major points of common reference are not literature but films, TV and sports. One is impressed by the tremendous amount of commonality created by the NCAA basketball championship or

Some educators find this threatening, they feel that intellectual culture is constantly fighting a losing competition with media culture and sports culture.

But if mass culture is part of the culture we teach, or in fact if we in universities are in a certain way mass culture (which we are now, what we're trying

to do is popularize culture the same way that the media do), then maybe the way to revive the kind of intellectual culture that flourished in the 19th century would be not to abandon literature or high culture, but to tie it more intricately with media, football and so forth. Especially since a lot of the same issues turn out to be going on in both. Some institutions are now doing just this in interdisciplinary programs with names like "Cultural Studies." If you take a popular film course and a contemporary literary course, it becomes obvious that contemporary literature is about a lot of the same things that film is about, and a lot of the techniques cut across the two media. Concepts like narrative and interpretation are involved in both reading Shakespeare and watching a film. It seems to me the more we connect these components, the more we can create something comparable to a 19th century literary society, dealing not just with literature, but with culture in the wider sense.

So making our academic humanities more cultural, and social, and even political would not be unprecedented. It would be a return to what had been done in the 19th century, although we would do it in a different way now and one would hope that there would be different political persuasions engaged, and that some kind of engagement of this cultural conflict of left vs. right would take place. But I don't think we can create this kind of community in ex-

tracurricular activities, it has to be done in the courses. We spend so much time in those courses, faculty and students, that anything we try to do outside the courses is going to be in competition with courses and will lose.

CORADDI: You were just mentioning politics. You talk in *Professing Literature* about how in the period of the World Wars literary studies were under a good deal of pressure to present a uniform ideology, to make sure there were no Communist or Fascist elements. You also mentioned earlier the criticism coming from William Bennett. Do you think that now, in the immediate post-Reagan era, there are similar kinds of political pressures being exerted?

GG: Yes, definitely, but the politics is repressed or denied. The right claims that literature and culture are above politics, or should be, and that it's only we on the left are "politicizing" literature and culture. But the fact is that English could never have achieved the prominence that it has in universities if it weren't for 19th century nationalism, national patriotism and pride. That is one reason why we study literature in national departments—English, French, Spanish, German, and so forth. It is because of a political idea, 19th century nationalism. In fact the very term "American Literature" is a politicization of literature. People who are against the politicization of literature should be against teaching English and American lit-

erature because those are political not literary categories and originated in the chauvinistic patriotism of the 19th century. Now most of this has been forgotten. You don't go into the average English course today and hear the professor say "come on, we've got to really get behind the English, Anglo-Saxon spirit and see that Englishness is superior to Frenchness," say. But, if you go back a hundred years, that kind of national competition was very much at the center of the founding of these departments.

Also important were the European immigrants in the 19th century. English would not have achieved the prominent place that it has had if not been for the feeling that there was a need for a certain force of cultural unity to hold in check the diversity of races, nationalities, and classes that were coming pouring into education. Whenever you hear this common culture rhetoric, "we've got to get back to the common culture," you have reason to suspect that what's at issue is an attempt to contain and control from above what is perceived as a threatening move from below, of nationalities, ethnic groups, races and so forth. Now, I'm not saying the systems necessarily worked that way. That was the intention by many prominent educators at the beginning, to use English studies and the humanities to socialize people into a monolithic notion of what being an American was. But those who use the rhetoric of "common culture" are una-

ware of the political history of those terms and the fact that in the past they have functioned explicitly as a defense of the American way against Bolsheviks and European immigrants. There's a very powerful political content to this new rhetoric of "common culture," but it disguises itself as apolitical. One of the central things that needs to be debated is who is being "political" and who is not being political and what do we mean by being political in the university today.

CORADDI: And there are degrees of being political.

GG: Well, a case can be made for the notion of "academic disinterestedness," but this is a very important debate that's going on around students, behind the scenes: "Is the study of the humanities political or isn't it?"

CORADDI: I get the impression through what you just said and through what you've written that, in addition to being interdisciplinary, your ideas are very much intercultural in terms of what should be taught. Probably the most important question to me is, for those of us who plan to become teachers and who want to teach this way, how can we be trained to do it? The breadth of the required knowledge is intimidating to me. I wonder also, with graduate programs being as they are, with interconnected training not usually available, even in the general sense often, how those of us who want

to teach it will be able to.

GG: That is a pertinent question. One could say that, in the wake of the so called "knowledge explosion," even within a single delimited field, as defined in old-fashioned ways, the amount of knowledge is intimidating and one is always inadequate. It seems to me that education, training, teaching always proceeds by certain reduction. When we teach English literature, we don't claim that we've read the whole of English literature or that students will read all of English literature. We assume some notion of representative works. That can be tricky, because arguably you can never be fully representative, but by choosing diverse examples of different traditions, we can at least begin to construct a picture that isn't just monolithic. It seems to me that this is the solution. You can't know everything, but,

CORADDI: Specialization can remain useful as long as it's gone about with an awareness of what is excluded and what the principles that are being specialized in relate to.

GG: Awareness of cultural difference is tremendously important, quite apart from how much of those cultural differences you're able to steep yourself in. Obviously, it's important to try to do as much as you can. I would come back to my point on the need to work collectively, because the more expansive the notion of culture we adopt, the more multi-cultural it is, the more there is to know and the less an isolated individual scholar can do it all by himself. You may not have read American Indian poetry, but if your colleague has read it, he or she can help educate you in what you haven't read. In other words, the problem of ex-

perience of information becomes less damaging if others possess it. I can draw on their knowledge in my work.

CORADDI: So what needs to be increased isn't the knowledge of the professor but the ability to teach receptively to other teaching, and the ability to teach collectively? I notice that you've written about the productive usefulness of team teaching. But I've heard numerous complaints of professors attempting that and not being successful.

GG: Well, team teaching can be a very expensive, and can reproduce student passivity, with two teachers instead of one. What I am trying to propose is more on the order of connecting courses than team teaching. This idea of professors in different courses agreeing to teach some of the same books, and using

Awareness of cultural difference is tremendously important, quite apart from how much of those cultural differences you're able to steep yourself in.

then again, you never could, even when the disciplines were relatively well bounded and narrowly constricted.

pertise is made more desperate the more we think of ourselves as atomized units, closed off from one another. The fact that I don't possess a particular

those books to construct a set of common experiences. You could even do what I've proposed in a couple of articles, which is thematize a semester. Say the

English Department at X College this fall will have a theme—it will be about the politics of the humanities—"Are the humanities political or aren't they?" Choose a couple of texts, some of them literary texts and some critical to give focus to the issue. Next semester go to another theme.

CORADDI: I want to move from the teachers to the students. You mentioned that certain kinds of teaching that are going on now breed passivity in students.

GG: It's not a matter of the methods of teaching, but of the whole environment.

CORADDI: I couldn't help getting a sense of complicity when you describe in your book the "good student" who learns the literature of Intellectual-speak and figures out what the professor wants and feeds it back to them. Do you see some amount of complicity for the fact that something is lost when often the students are perfectly willing that the things be lost? Is there complicity on the part of students in being content with things being separated?

GG: Sure, there's some. But students are just as divided about this issue as any of us. I think that one part of the student wants to get all this stuff over with and get on and is forced into a kind of cynical adherence to the routine. Another part of the student—and different students, would have these conflicts in different proportions—sincerely wants to become a thoughtful, re-

flective person and doesn't want to be cynical, doesn't want to fake it. But my feeling is that the only way to prevent routinization, the cynical part of the system from dominating, is by bringing in to play more collective activities. The advantage of a more collective and connected system is that it is more self-correcting. When an issue like the authenticity of the student, or the degree to which going through all these academic motions is a kind of sham procedure, is raised, this issue can stay on the agenda for a while if it is carried over to the next class and the next. Right now we have no way of carrying anything over on the agenda. The problem has to be addressed as a system, I think that the one common thread in my approach is that we need to address education as a system, and no doubt as a system that is tied into the larger social system too, which complicates things considerably. (It may complicate doing what I want to do, because I'm arguing for a collectivized system of education in a culture which is very much dominated by individualism.) But most thinking about education doesn't start by looking at education as a system. It looks at it as a bunch of courses taught by a bunch of teachers, you see. I don't think education should be confused with teaching. Teaching is one of the components of education, but education is the sum total of a certain organization of teaching.

CORADDI: Your book demonstrates a repeating cycle

of people trying to revive or improve or, to put it without a value judgement, alter what is taught and the way things are taught. The large impression that you give is that few of them, if any, were successful at achieving what they intended. How does that make you feel about your own program, considering the dangers of institutionalization and routine?

GG: But, you're right, I tell a story in which the well-intentioned programs of the innovators always wind up being a version of the same old academic routine. So why wouldn't that happen in my case? Who can say? But you try anyway. You try to push the system in the direction that you want, while others are pushing in other directions and you see what happens. What else can you do?

But my argument would be that we've never had a system that allowed the reality of intellectual life into the foreground, the reality of constant conflict. Historically, we've always shoved that conflict into the background and in doing so we've made it harder for students to penetrate to what we're all about.

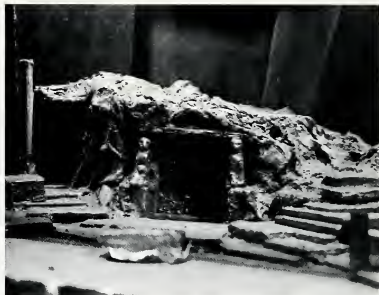
**Interview Conducted by:
Wil Gehne**

Così fan tutte

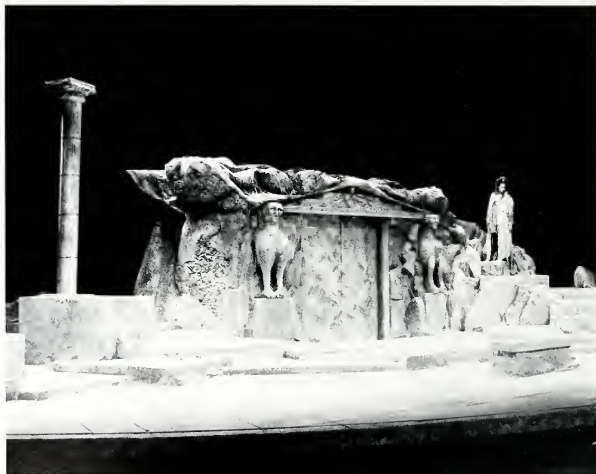


The set for *Così fan tutte* recalls the Age of Reason from which the play dates. Darwin Reid Payen's elegant stage excellently demonstrates the symmetric values of Mozart's day. Opera is not stylistically tied to the nature of its sets or stages; this allows the designer great leeway. But *Così fan tutte*, presented here roughly as a period piece, is complemented by its set, which incorporates many design mores of the era in which it was written. *Così fan tutte* was translated by Ruth & Thomas Martin. It was staged in Aycock Theatre April 6-8.

The stage for *Medea*, designed by W. Todd Pickett, is reminiscent of the ancient Greek theatrical convention. The single building of the ancient Greek stage stood for any castle, dungeon, mountain or ship for which the script called. In this modern adaptation (set in ancient times) of Euripides' original by Robinson Jeffers, the house of sorceress Medea is portrayed darkly. The windswept, rocky house adapts the old Greek stage to modern aesthetic principles of stage design without alienating the tragic tradition. *Medea* was staged February 14-18 1990 in Taylor Theatre.



Model for the Stage Design



Photos by: Randy Harris

MEΔEA

MEDEA Stage Design by W. Todd Pickett

PERFORMANCE ART:

Performance art is a twentieth-century phenomenon, originating during the dada/futurist period in WW I Europe. The terms "performance art" or "happening" are relatively recent. Performance pieces are generally hybrid aggregations, involving maybe film, taped sound and

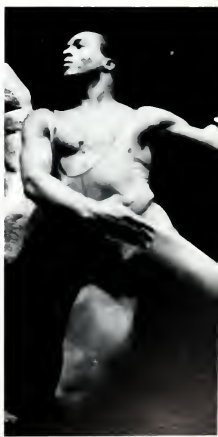


music, dance, props-- probably more. They can be outright brawls, as the dada shows were, or parties, as were Warhol's shows during the 60s. Depicted here is *A Fine Frame of Mind*, by Cathy Altice, presented in the Outer Gallery of Melver building on December 11, 1989, which incorporated painting/calligraphy, dance and recitation.





The dancer appears in miniature. This photograph does not well-encapsulate the movement and interplay of the dancer; neither would film. *L'age de Bronze* was choreographed by Sandra Neels. Kurt Gabriel, Jonathan McLean, and Rebecca Weichinger made the hands. The dancer was Sherone Price, music by Gil Frey.



Photos by: Jim Counts

This piece, *For One, Some or All*, was organized by Jennifer Twiggs' dance improvisation class. Murray Reams and Jeff Wiechinger made the music; the sculpture was by Rebecca Wiechinger. The choreography was inspired.



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Excerpted from a longer poem by Bruno Iddorac, an Apple Macintosh under the influence of the virus WDEF-B.

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